

## **FISCAL NOTE**

### **HB 2634 - SB 3312**

February 10, 2008

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** Creates the Office of the Child Advocate for the Protection of Children and establishes the rights, powers and required duties of such office and establishes the Child Advocate Advisory Committee. Creates a Class B misdemeanor for the discrimination or retaliation against a child, parent or guardian, or any employee of a facility, agency, institution, or any other person for making a complaint or providing information to the advocate.

#### **ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:**

**Increase State Revenue – Not Significant**  
**Increase State Expenditures – Exceeds \$700,000**

**Increase Local Revenue – Not Significant**  
**Increase Local Expenditures – Not Significant**

#### **Assumptions:**

- The increase of state expenditures is dependant on the jurisdiction, size and operation of the Office of the Child Advocate.
- According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, as of October 2007, there were 29 states with either ombudsman or offices of the child advocate. Of these offices, the yearly budgets range from \$400,000 to \$2,500,000.
- Based on the personnel budget (\$692,141) and operating budget (\$99,719) of the state of Georgia, it is estimated that the personnel budget of the Office will be at least \$600,000 and the operating budget will be at least \$100,000.
- A small increase in cases in the court system, which will result in additional state and local government expenditures for processing the cases and additional state and local government revenue from fees, taxes and costs collected. These revenue and expenditures are estimated to be not significant.
- There will not be a sufficient number of misdemeanor prosecutions for local governments to experience any significant increase in revenue or expenditures.

- According to the Commission on Children and Youth, the Office of the Child Advocate may qualify for federal funding received by the Department of Children's Services for foster care services or Victims of Child Abuse grants. No grants have been identified at this time.
- The Commission on Children and Youth currently has an Ombudsman Office which is budgeted through an appropriation of \$131,800. It is not clear at this time how or if this office will be connected to the proposed Office of the Child Advocate.

**CERTIFICATION:**

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James W. White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "White".

James W. White, Executive Director

/kml